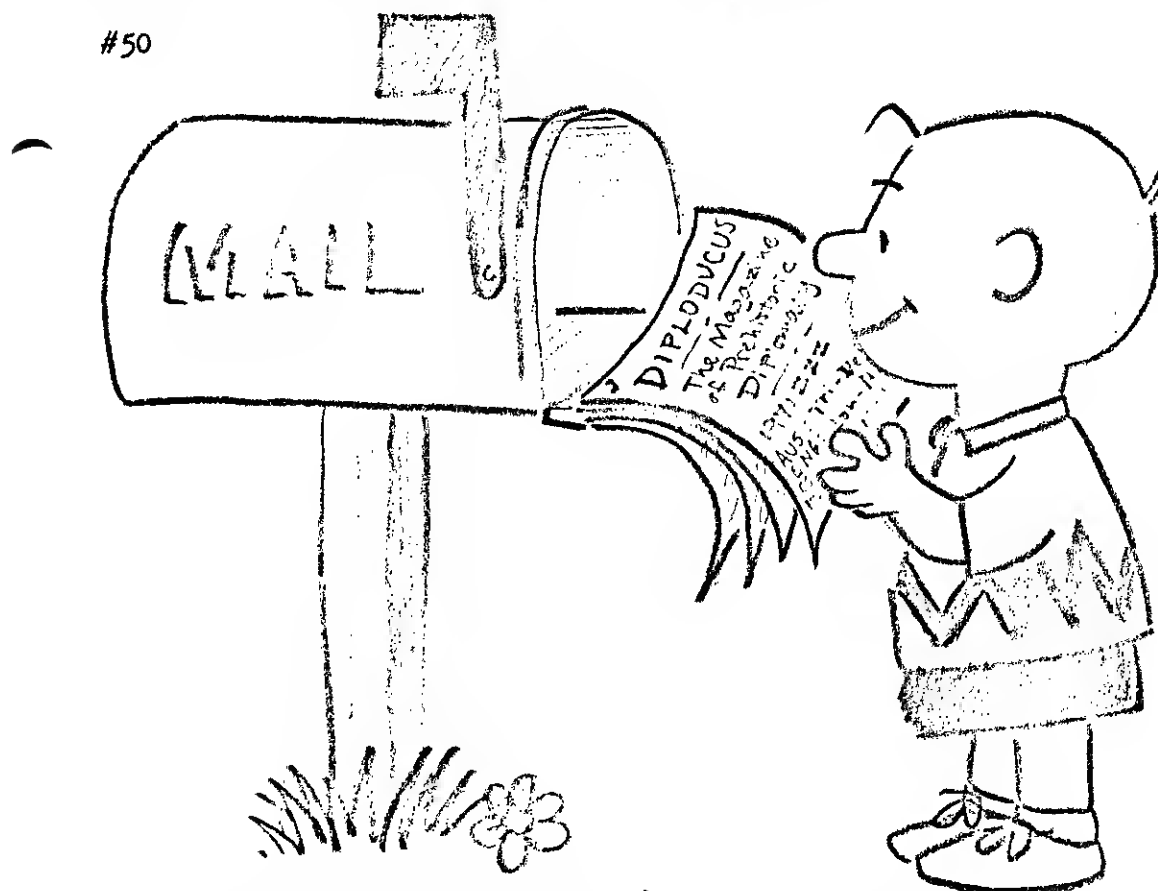


WOODSIEER ARCHIVES

#50

18 December 1971



HAPPINESS is not playing
truly in the new game!

GT

all, since midterms, it has finally happened! That long-awaited game of the year of the football team, is finally underway. Its revival was announced in January, 17 of November 1991 but a delay was caused due to the replacement of some of the original players. In any case, a majority of the original field was retained and, in fact, the revised players still remain more wise between them than the original field, an unbelievable 30 since the other or the other is our correct we if I'm wrong, but it is believed that the distribution of the first starting field hold more wins between them than any prior period of the year. And to increase the excitement, some of the players have long-standing track records. It should be an exciting game to watch with stars being respect!

As to the like spectator interest, the game will run under a strict 2 week/ 2 week/ 2 week deadline (except for spring 1961, a 4 week deadline to allow the initial "outstanding" and an "emerging" player of expert status will give a flowly-flow pace analysis. Also a pre-announced game is announced and will be aided and abetted by the editor of "Herald" in, later, known to New York City circles as the Hoosier hatchet. All in all, 1961's should be an year to watch, and I will do my best to see that it is run smoothly.

and now, an introduction to the participants: (A majority of the players were the original field players herein wanted a new drawing since two of the original players were missing). Carol pulled the countries out of a bag, by the way.)

1-28-1961 Winter 1960

ALSO: Len Lakoffa, 1806 N. Richmond Street, Chicago, Illinois 60647. Len is the president of IAP, has written many fine articles on Diplomacy, and currently ranks as the second board of the latest Archives Publishers Poll (AIP). It's too bad you didn't get Russia, Len. I'd like to see you get four builds in 101 in this panel. (Len is the only person in panel Diplomacy history to realize Russia's full potential in Spring 1902.)

SEYMOUR M. GREEN BROSHITZ, 200 Clinton Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201. Green ranks eighth in the latest Leyerleim poll (LFF) and is considered by Lenton and I to have authored the greatest articles on diplomacy strategy ever written. In any case, there is no argument as having one of the finest minds on diplomacy strategy in the world.

Mr. Ed Lirsan, 48-20-39th Street, Long Island City, New York 11104, had worked first in the latest Calhaver Point Count Rating List (CPRL). Ed is one of the most experienced players in the hobby and in my opinion has written the most brilliant articles on the subject ever produced for opening play.

Mr. J. J. Jeffery, Apt. 1-B, 4011 North Pennsylvania, unknown this, Chicago, Ill. He has three wins to his credit and is surpassed by only four other players in early point average score on the latest Numerus Rating System. He also placed third in the latest

WALKER: Rod Walker, 3058 Wesley Blvd., San Diego, California 92116. Rod is ranked sixth in the latest IFF. He is also the most prolific writer of diplomacy criticism in the hobby and has written many of them for Strategy and Tactics. (An example of one of his articles is given later in this issue.)

WYTHE: John Wythe, 621 East Prospect, Girard, Ohio 44020. John is recognized by most old timers and publishers in the hobby as the world champion Diplomacy player. He lost this out, he took a crushing lead for first place in the latest All, receiving seven first place votes out of eleven.

WETICK: Buddy Wetick, 3702 Sandy Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland 20906. Buddy has five wins to his credit and placed on the second board of the latest IFF. He is known to be very fine in tactics and is probably the most tenacious player in the hobby.

LEYERLEIN: Doug Leyerlein, 3934 NW Southern, Seattle, Washington 98105. Doug ranked ninth in both the latest APF and IFF. It is therefore obvious that he is universally recognized as an outstanding player. Of course, maybe his five wins or ranking sixth in the latest CPUEI had something to do with this?!

UPCOMING 1963 ORDERS are due on Saturday, 15 January 1972. Also, submission of General Orders at that time is strongly encouraged.

INTO THE ARCHIVES NO. 10

We are glad to have Rod Walker with us for the first time since his last article in Hoosier Archives #31. As you will see, Edi Hirsan's article on opening play for Italy got Rod to thinking along these lines for England. Now between Edi and Rod, we have original articles on openings for Austria (to be published soon), England, Germany, and Italy. So, with a little cajoling, we can get Edi and Rod to come up with openings articles for the other three countries?!

THE CHURCHILL OPENING

by Rod Walker

This article owes its genesis to two sources, which I would like to acknowledge. First, Edi Hirsan, whose brilliant essay "The Lepanto Opening" got me thinking along lines of classic or specific openings. Second, Phil Castora, playing England in 1970-71 (Serendip), who observed to me that if he ordered, in Spring 1901, "England makes the standard opening," the order would be unambiguous. Here on the latter in a moment. Anyway, my thanks to Edi and Phil for their help, unintended as it was.

The similarity of Diplomacy to Chess has been noted in many places. One of my own articles in Strategy and Tactics is entitled "I-44" and is an article on openings. Much of what I will say in this article, in fact, I have said in "I-44", in my article on the last in "The Diplomacy Lookbook" series in the forthcoming Tactics and Variants, and elsewhere. The concept of the opening is very important in Diplomacy. It is especially important to recognize the tendency to make ineffective and even dangerous openings. There are in Diplomacy plenty of equivalents to R4-R4.

Phil Castora's remark about England's "standard opening" was clear in the right context. It was well-known in the extremely small Diplomacy world of 1964-5, and played extensively in the Los Angeles Science Fiction Society, one of the groups which learned the game directly from Allan Ballinger himself. In those days, England's standard and almost inevitable opening was "Sally, Lonsath, A Liv-Yor. That is England's R-44, without a doubt. It is wildly aggressive, but at the same time (as we will see) partly defensive.

In the years between 1966 and 1971, during which Phil was not active in postal Diplomacy, a variant of that opening developed. It is England's R-44, a flashier, more aggressive, and less defensive opening. It changes only one of the older standard moves; namely, it uses R4-R4.

I call this the "Churchill Opening." It recalls the last days of the "Phony War" phase of World War II, when England assembled an army in Scotland and prepared for a descent upon Norway as a means of flanking Germany (only to find that Germany was descending on Norway as

... (about George Harter's cover, Ned... it couldn't have happened to a nicer guy!! Don't blame me; Carol drew the countries! (((Don't blame me!!! C.))) Ah, well, maybe you'll see England next time.))

At first glance, the move to Edinburgh rather than Farnham would seem to change very little. Either position is useful for a convoy to Norway in fall 1901 (although in the context of diplomacy, such a convoy turns out to be anti-Russian, not anti-German). Furthermore, the A-Yor has one advantage A-Edi does not. In the event of a French move, F-Fre-Eng A-Yor can defend London while England can still support itself into Norway (in the event of a Russian move, A-Ros-Stp makes this necessary). For this, the defense of London requires using P-Nth (P-Nth-lon or A-Edi-lon C by P-Nth), so that a supported attack on Norway becomes impossible. That is the weakness of the Churchill Opening.

What are its strengths? The strength lies in aggressive flexibility. In order to assess this, it is necessary to note that England could do with P-Hrg, P-Nth, A-Yor, first. There are several options: (1) convoy an Army to Norway and support it in, (2) support a fleet in, (3) attack Norway and place a fleet in Larentis, (4) attack Norway with a fleet and use the single fleet (with or without the army) to meddle in continental affairs. This leaves out the defensive options, already discussed.

With A-Edinburgh, England can do all these things as well. The secret lies with the fact that the Army can now be conveyed by either fleet. This adds two new offensive options: (5) attack Norway with the army and still have P-Nth free to meddle in continental affairs, and (6) attack Norway with the army and move a fleet into the Skagerrak. This latter move is based on a British strategy to attack Russia via Sweden first, rather than through St. Petersburg. These two new options give England greater flexibility, not only in movement, but in cooperation, a decided asset in a nation whose offensive possibilities are limited and must be created by combination with other powers.

Finally, what about that weakness? There is one circumstance in which it becomes a real problem.

If France orders P-Fre-Eng, England can still defend London and put a unit in Norway, thus obtaining the build he will need to hold off the French.

If Russia orders A-Ros-Stp, England can still take Norway with support and get a build.

The danger lies in games where France orders P-Fre-Eng and Russia orders A-Ros-Stp. The question is, how often is this likely to happen? The answer is, not very. For France, P-Fre-Eng involves giving up all claim to Belgium* or failure to secure both Iberian centers in 1901. For Russia, A-Ros-Stp involves Russia's "northern strategy," which promises slim pickings, at best, and foregoing the (usually) more profitable "southern strategy." There are circumstances in which such moves become attractive, and even necessary. They are both, however, rare openings. The game in which they are both used is seldom seen. The dual move suggests a Franco-Russian alliance, but that is more reasonably directed against Germany. A fear of Anglo-German alliance could provoke this sort of things, however. Another alliance which provokes this move is Fra/Rus/Rus, an alliance which has as its only object the elimination of Allan Calhaver's "Wicked Witch of the North," England.

In the final analysis, then, England is taking a bit of a risk with the Churchill Opening. However, if he has been astute and persuasive in his diplomacy, he should have nothing to fear. Even should France and Russia move against him, he still has not lost. He must now simply cope with a problem which he risked when he selected this opening--and a problem which would be of only slightly smaller magnitude had he been more defensive, anyway.

Very occasionally, France will choose to be really aggressive on the question of Belgium, moving P-Fre-Eng, A-Fre-Eng, and even A-Fre-Lur (thus giving up all hope for Iberia). Such a move is wholly unwise--first, because it antagonizes England unnecessarily; second, because it sacrifices a sure gain of 2 for a merely probable gain of 1; third, because it puts all of France's eggs in one basket before he knows which basket really needs his attention.

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ADDRESS CHANGE: From December 22 to 29 we will be visiting Carol's folks in Colorado. The address is Nelson B. Saunders, P.O. 1, Box 576, La Junta, Colorado 81050.